

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 1, after the title, please insert as follows:

This application is the US national phase of international application

PCT/EP2004/006639 filed 18 June 2004, which designated the U.S. and claims priority to **IT MO2003A000180 filed 19 June 2003**, and **IT MO2004A000031 filed 11 February 2004**, the entire contents of each of which are hereby incorporated by reference.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1 line 24, as follows:

According to the invention, a burner is provided that is suppliable with a mixture of air and fuel, comprising a burner body provided with a diffuser in which openings are made for the passage and subsequent combustion of the mixture, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the diffuser is divided into a plurality of diffuser elements that are adjacent to one another, each element being at least partially free to expand in at least one direction.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2 line 10, as follows:

According to a further aspect of the present invention rigidity-varying ~~means~~elements are provided that ~~is~~are suitable for diminishing the rigidity of the diffuser element in a direction parallel to its greater dimension.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 5 line 35, as follows:

In Figure 1, 1 shows, overall, a burner according to the invention, comprising a base

element 2, with for example the shape of a flange, and a head element 3, with for example the shape of a bottom, between which a diffuser 4 is arranged and fixed consisting of a plurality of diffuser elements 5, arranged as a cylindrical envelope configuration. Each diffuser element 5 (Figure 4) has a U-shaped cross section, with a first wall top face 7 of each diffuser element 5 that has a substantially rectangular shape and is turned towards the outside of the burner 1; on the wall-top face 7 openings 6 are made for the passage of the mixture of air and fuel delivered inside the burner 1. The diffuser element 5 furthermore comprises two side walls-faces 8 connected to the two greater opposite sides of the first wall top face 7 and placed in an approximately radial direction and two front walls-faces 14, only one of which is visible in Figure 4, connected to the lesser sides of the first wall-top face 7 and approximately perpendicular thereto. Inside each diffuser element 5 a flow-distributing element 9 can be arranged, consisting, for example, of a plate 10 (Figure 8), on which holes 11 are distributed for the passage of the mixture of air and fuel. The plate 10 is furthermore provided, on two sides that are opposite each other, with respective bumps 13, which act as spacers to keep the plate 10 at a distance from the wall 7.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 6 line 22, as follows:

The flow-distributing elements 9 can be inserted inside the diffuser elements 5 by resting them against rest elements comprising pairs of support rods 12. These support rods 12, in the case of the burner in Figures 1 and 2, are arranged substantially parallel to the walls-side faces 8 of the respective diffuser element 5 and protrude by their ends through holes 15 made in the front walls-faces 14. The holes 15 have

shapes and dimensions such as to couple with play with the rods 12 in such a way that the latter do not hinder heat expansion of the diffuser element 5. The rods 12 also act as fixing ~~means~~ elements of the diffuser element 5 to the base element 2 and to the head element 3 of the burner 1.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 7 line 27, as follows:

In this burner 20 it is advantageous to arrange the support rods 12 transversely in relation to the diffuser elements 5, passing through holes 16 made in the side walls ~~faces~~ 8 of each diffuser element 5 and further holes made on pairs of opposite sides 24 of the frame 21. In this way the rods 12, by passing through the different adjacent diffuser elements 5, and the pairs of opposite sides 24, also act as connecting elements connecting the diffuser elements 5 together and with the frame 21.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 10 line 1, as follows:

Figure 19 shows a sixth embodiment of a diffuser element 37 with a U-shaped cross section with a ~~first-top~~ face 38 intended to be turned towards the outside of the burner, and ~~a second and third face-side faces~~ 39, 40, that are substantially perpendicular to the ~~first-top~~ face 38 and are intended to be turned towards the inside of the burner. On the top face 38 openings 41, 42 are made for the passage of the mixture of air and fuel. The openings 41, 42 may have the shape of slits 41 and of holes 42. The diffuser element 37 shown in Figure 19 is provided on the ~~first-top~~ face 38 with two rows of slits 41 that are parallel to each other between which a plurality of holes 42 is arranged. At

regular intervals along the rows of slits 41 and holes 42 further slits 43 may be made that extend along the entire width of the zone of the top face 38 on which the slits 41 and the holes 42 are located. These further slits 43, in addition to acting as openings for the passage of the mixture, enable the top face 38 to absorb heat expansion without being subjected to excessive mechanical stress generated by such expansion.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 12 line 19, as follows:

The diffuser element 60 has a U-shaped cross section with a first-top face 61 intended to be turned towards the outside of the burner, and a second-and-third-face-side faces 62, 63 that are substantially perpendicular to the first-top face 61 and are intended to be turned towards the inside of the burner. On the first-top face 61 openings 51, 52, 53 are made that have a shape and distribution that are similar to the corresponding openings made on the first face 47 of the diffuser elements 46 and 57 disclosed above.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 12 line 28, as follows:

The second-and-third-face-side faces 62 and 63 are respectively joined at their free ends with a second distributing element 64 that also has a U-shaped cross section with a first face 65 substantially parallel to the first-top face 61 of the diffuser element 60 and a second and third face, respectively 66 and 67, substantially parallel to the second-side face 62 and to the third-side face 63, respectively of the diffuser element 60.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 15 line 30, as follows:

In the diffuser element 98, the further slits 96 terminate at their respective ends, on the side walls-faces 79 and 80, with a length of L-shaped slit 99 that in turn terminates with a widening 100.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 16 line 19, as follows:

Figures 50 and 51 show a sixteenth embodiment of a diffuser element 106 according to the invention having a substantially triangular plan shape with a top face 107 in which openings 108, 108a are made for the evacuation of the mixture of air and fuel, side walls-faces 109 and front wall-face 110. The openings 108, 108a may have the shape of rows of slits 108 alternating with rows of holes 108a.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 17 line 10, as follows:

Figures 55 and 56 show a first version of the diffuser element 5 shown in Figure 4. In this first version, the diffuser element 5 is provided on its front faces 14 with rest elements comprising respective tabs 120 obtained by punching the front faces 14.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 17 line 21, as follows:

Figures 57 and 58 show a second version of the diffuser element 5 shown in Figure 4.

In this second version, the diffuser element 5 is provided with rest elements comprising respective recesses 121 on its front faces 14.